

Thurrock - An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future

# Extraordinary Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The meeting will be held at **7.00 pm** on **29 October 2019**

**Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, Essex RM17 6SL**

## Membership:

Councillors Lynn Worrall (Chair), Chris Baker (Vice-Chair), Qaisar Abbas, Colin Churchman, Andrew Jefferies and Joycelyn Redsell

Lynn Mansfield, Housing Tenant Representative

## Substitutes:

Councillors Daniel Chukwu, Sara Muldowney, Terry Piccolo and Luke Spillman

## Agenda

Open to Public and Press

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| 2  | <b>Declaration of Interests</b>    |        |
| 3  | <b>Housing Development Process</b> | 5 - 10 |
| 4  | <b>Housing Strategy Timetable</b>  |        |
| This item is from the deferred Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 1 October 2019. |                                    |        |
| 5  | <b>Garage Project Update</b>       |        |
| This item is from the deferred Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 1 October 2019. |                                    |        |

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Agenda published on: **21 October 2019**

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## DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

Breaching those parts identified as a pecuniary interest is potentially a criminal offence

### Helpful Reminders for Members

- *Is your register of interests up to date?*
- *In particular have you declared to the Monitoring Officer all disclosable pecuniary interests?*
- *Have you checked the register to ensure that they have been recorded correctly?*

### When should you declare an interest at a meeting?

- **What matters are being discussed at the meeting?** (including Council, Cabinet, Committees, Subs, Joint Committees and Joint Subs); or
- If you are a Cabinet Member making decisions other than in Cabinet **what matter is before you for single member decision?**



**Does the business to be transacted at the meeting**

- relate to; or
- likely to affect

**any of your registered interests and in particular any of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests?**

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests shall include your interests or those of:

- your spouse or civil partner's
- a person you are living with as husband/ wife
- a person you are living with as if you were civil partners

where you are aware that this other person has the interest.

A detailed description of a disclosable pecuniary interest is included in the Members Code of Conduct at Chapter 7 of the Constitution. **Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer about disclosable pecuniary interests.**

**What is a Non-Pecuniary interest?** – this is an interest which is not pecuniary (as defined) but is nonetheless so significant that a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard to be so significant that it would materially impact upon your judgement of the public interest.

### **Pecuniary**

If the interest is not already in the register you must (unless the interest has been agreed by the Monitoring Officer to be sensitive) disclose the existence and nature of the interest to the meeting

If the Interest is not entered in the register and is not the subject of a pending notification you must within 28 days notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest for inclusion in the register

**Unless you have received dispensation upon previous application from the Monitoring Officer, you must:**

- **Not participate or participate further in any discussion of the matter at a meeting;**
- **Not participate in any vote or further vote taken at the meeting; and**
- **leave the room while the item is being considered/voted upon**

**If you are a Cabinet Member you may make arrangements for the matter to be dealt with by a third person but take no further steps**

### **Non- pecuniary**

Declare the nature and extent of your interest including enough detail to allow a member of the public to understand its nature



**You may participate and vote in the usual way but you should seek advice on Predetermination and Bias from the Monitoring Officer.**

## Our Vision and Priorities for Thurrock

An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future.

1. **People** – a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay
  - High quality, consistent and accessible public services which are right first time
  - Build on our partnerships with statutory, community, voluntary and faith groups to work together to improve health and wellbeing
  - Communities are empowered to make choices and be safer and stronger together
2. **Place** – a heritage-rich borough which is ambitious for its future
  - Roads, houses and public spaces that connect people and places
  - Clean environments that everyone has reason to take pride in
  - Fewer public buildings with better services
3. **Prosperity** – a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations
  - Attractive opportunities for businesses and investors to enhance the local economy
  - Vocational and academic education, skills and job opportunities for all
  - Commercial, entrepreneurial and connected public services

|  |  |                             |
|--|--|-----------------------------|
| <b>29 October 2019</b>   |  | <b>ITEM: 3</b>              |
| <b>Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>   |  |                             |
| <b>Housing Development Process</b>   |  |                             |
| <b>Wards and communities affected:</b><br>All  |  | <b>Key Decision:</b><br>Key |
| <b>Report of:</b> Keith Andrews, Housing Development Manager                                     |  |                             |
| <b>Accountable Assistant Director:</b> David Moore, Interim Assistant Director of Place Delivery |  |                             |
| <b>Accountable Director:</b> Andy Millard, Interim Director of Place                             |  |                             |
| <b>This report is</b> Public   |  |                             |

## Executive Summary

On 18 June 2019, Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee endorsed the delivery of a New Homes Delivery Programme. This report now sets out the criteria and process by which prospective sites in Council ownership will be identified for residential development by the Council itself (through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA)) or for development by the Council's wholly owned company, Thurrock Regeneration Limited (TRL). This report is not concerned with any site disposals or development, merely about agreeing the process and criteria for such decision-making.

### 1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to comment on the proposed process and criteria by which Council owned sites are selected for redevelopment for residential purposes.**

### 2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1** The Council has agreed ambitious targets for house building both within the HRA and by TRL which are to build:
- up to 500 affordable HRA homes between 2019 to 2029
  - 1000 homes for sale and rent by TRL by 2023
- 2.2** This follows the publication of the South Essex Strategic Housing Market Assessment (May 2017) which objectively assessed the need for housing in Thurrock between 2014 and 2037 as being between 1,074-1,381 new

dwellings per annum, within which the affordable housing element is estimated at 472 dwellings per annum.

- 2.3 Accordingly, the emerging Local Plan acknowledges the need for up to 32,000 new homes in Thurrock during the next Local Plan period to 2038. The new homes developed by the Council and TRL will contribute to this total.
- 2.4 On 18 June 2019, Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee endorsed the delivery of a New Homes Delivery Programme through the Housing Revenue Account for the next 5 to 10 years and resolved to receive regular updates to assist in its successful delivery.
- 2.5 This report now sets out the robust criteria and transparent process by which prospective sites in Council ownership are identified for residential development by the Council itself for Housing Revenue Account (HRA) stock or for development by the Council's wholly owned company Thurrock Regeneration Limited (TRL). The process is geared to enable the sites to be delivered efficiently and at pace. Sites to be developed by TRL will also have to go to TRL's Board for approval once the site is seen as viable and has received a resolution to grant planning permission.
- 2.6 It should be noted that the sites will in effect be a "long list" of sites to be considered for development. Their inclusion on the list does not constitute any form of planning endorsement. Moreover, before any sites are progressed for redevelopment, there will be a clear need for early and meaningful engagement with communities.

### **3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

#### **Proposed Process**

- 3.1 The identification and filtering of potential development sites is a sensitive process that requires the careful consideration of a wide range of factors. By agreeing a range of criteria, this filtering process will be transparent and will also ensure that unsuitable sites, based on the agreed criteria, are not brought forward, thereby maximising the use of time and resource. Once the criteria and sites are agreed, then consideration can be focused on resident engagement regarding the sites, with an increased focus on pace and effectiveness of delivery supported by the views of the local community.
- 3.2 The following are proposed to be key criteria for sites deemed potentially suitable for development. Sites will often fall within more than one criterion. These criteria will be:
  - Sites will have been initially identified as suitable for development through the corporate asset review, known as the 3R's (Retain, Release, Reuse)
  - Sites can also be identified as surplus to requirements by the Council's multi-disciplinary Property Board



- If the site includes Open Space, it will only be brought forward for development if the open space is considered to be of poor quality and no longer required for that purpose (as defined in the 2016 Open Space Assessment)
  - Council owned car parks could also be brought forward if a Council review has concluded that the car park is no longer required for its original or other strategic car parking purpose
  - Sites that are HRA property can also be brought forward if the property is identified as being no longer required or fit for purpose – for example redundant garage sites identified through the HRA garage sites review - or where a more effective use of the asset has been identified and agreed
  - Sites can also be brought forward if there is clear evidence that their development will contribute to the wider regeneration of an area.
- 3.3 Subject to a site falling within one or more of these criteria, each site will then be subjected to a rigorous analysis of available background information about the sites, followed in due course by appropriate on-site assessments once the list of potential sites has been agreed. Examples of the analysis work undertaken would typically include:
- Land ownership and legal constraints reports
  - Flood and air quality assessments
  - Utilities (gas, water, electric, cable) surveys
  - Topographical and geotechnical studies to understand the layout and ground makeup
  - Ecological and arboricultural surveys.
- 3.4 Each site will then have an architecturally-led study to explore the type and quantity of housing that could be developed on the site, ensuring that the study meet the Council's high quality standards for housing. Various options are then assessed, together with their respective cost plans. The expected costs and receipts are then put into a financial viability analysis model to inform decisions as to whether a site is suitable and financially viable to develop. The study is an exercise to determine how many houses could go onto a site and the study is not expected to be the final design that will be submitted for planning approval.
- 3.5 If the site appears suitable and financially viable to develop, then it will be included on the "Long List" of potential sites for development.
- 3.6 It is important to stress that the inclusion of a site on the "Long List" does not constitute any planning endorsement.
- 3.7 The "Long List" of potential sites for Development will have input from Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee and then go for approval to Cabinet, with appropriate amendments.
- 3.8 The sites will then go forward for detailed consultation with local communities, in a process that will be supported by the Council's internal Community

Development and Equalities Team, with input from other agencies as required. This is to ensure that consultation processes meet the Council's standards and that Members and residents are fully engaged in the process. The views of the community and stakeholders will be reviewed to determine any amendments required and how the scheme should be taken forward.

- 3.9 Any significant changes to the sites on the agreed list (such as changes to the "redline" boundary if neighbouring sites are identified) would be made in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, with significant changes being reported back to Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.10 The process of identifying and agreeing the "Long List" of sites for development is intended to be an annual process, with a list of new sites being reviewed each year by Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee and approved by Cabinet. Local Ward Councillors will also be contacted about sites on the 'Long List' of identified site that are within their ward boundary. This annual review process should ensure that new sites are brought forward regularly, thereby sustaining an annual pipeline of new sites to ensure the Council's agreed Housing Delivery targets are achieved

#### **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 4.1 To ensure that the Council can achieve its Housing Delivery targets in an open and transparent manner and in close liaison with local communities.

#### **5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

- 5.1 As referenced above, this Committee has previously considered the New Homes Delivery Programme on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2019 and it will also consider the 'Long List' of sites at a future date.

#### **6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

- 6.1 The proposed process closely aligns with the Council's Vision and Priorities adopted in 2018. In particular it resonates with the "Place" theme which focuses on houses, places and environments that residents can take pride in.

#### **7. Implications**

##### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Jonathan Wilson**  
**Assistant Director, Finance**

Approval of the process will enable the Council and TRL to move forward with delivering a house programme which will contribute to the wider objectives of

the Council and support the Council's MTFS (where schemes are developed through TRL).

Costs associated with the initial feasibility assessment of schemes will need to be considered depending on the nature of the scheme and whether it is subsequently developed by the HRA or TRL.

The proposal is also likely to reduce the level of capital receipts available to the Council to fund other priorities.

## 7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Courage Emovon**  
**Acting Strategic Lead / Deputy Head of Legal Services**

This report sets out the process and criteria by which Council owned sites are identified and selected for residential development via the Housing Revenue Account or for development by Thurrock Regeneration Limited (a Council wholly owned company). Legal Services will provide all legal advice (if any) arising from this report, as and when required by the Council.

## 7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Becky Price**  
**Team Manager – Community Development and Equalities**

The service has completed a Community Equality Impact Assessment (CEIA) in line with Equality Act 2010 requirements and to gather an understanding of the impact on protected groups through the implementation of the process set out in this report. The findings from the CEIA established that the implications for each protected group is currently considered neutral. Individual CEIAs will sit alongside development proposals with information gathered in consultation with communities determining potential impacts and mitigation where identified for individuals or groups with protected characteristics. This will ensure more detailed consideration of the impacts of particular developments than is possible within the scope of the overarching CEIA and process set out in this report.

## 7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, and Impact on Looked After Children)

None

## 8. Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- None

## **9. Appendices to the report**

- None

### **Report Author:**

Keith Andrews

Housing Development Manager

Place Delivery

# Work Programme

**Committee:** Housing Overview and Scrutiny

**Year:** 2019/2020

**Dates of Meetings:** 18 June 2019, 1 October 2019, 10 December 2019 and 11 February 2020

| Topic  | Lead Officer        | Requested by Officer/Member |
|--|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>18 June 2019</b>  |                     |                             |
| Homeless Hostels, Housing First and Support  | Lorrita Johnson     | Officers                    |
| 500 New Council Housing Update   | Detlev Munster      | Officers                    |
| Housing Performance Update   | Chris Seman         | Officers                    |
| Selective Licensing  | Dulal Ahmed         | Officers                    |
| Work Programme   | Democratic Services | Standard Item               |
| <b>1 October 2019</b>  |                     |                             |
| Housing Solutions Customer Excellence Programme – External Review Findings           | Lorrita Johnson     | Officers                    |
| Homelessness Prevention & Rough Sleeping Strategy Report                             | Ryan Farmer         | Officers                    |
| Housing Strategy Timetable ( <i>deferred to 29 October – extraordinary meeting</i> ) | Ryan Farmer         | Officers                    |
| Local Lettings Plans   | Ryan Farmer         | Officers                    |
| Garage Project Update ( <i>deferred to 29 October – extraordinary meeting</i> )      | Carol Hinvest       | Officers                    |

|   |                              |                     |
|---|------------------------------|---------------------|
| HRA Rents and Service Charges                                 | Carol Hinvest/ Mike Jones    | Officers            |
| Work Programme  | Democratic Services          | Standard Item       |
| <b>29 October 2019 - Extraordinary</b>                        |                              |                     |
| Housing Development Process                                   | Keith Andrews                | Officers            |
| Work Programme  | Democratic Services          | Standard Item       |
| <b>10 December 2019</b>                                       |                              |                     |
| Fees & Charges 2020/21  | Roger Harris                 | Officers            |
| Housing Performance Update                                    | Chris Seman                  | Officers            |
| Homelessness Prevention & Rough Sleeping Strategy             | Ryan Farmer                  | Officers            |
| HRA Medium Term Financial Strategy, Rents and Service Charges | Roger Harris / Julie Curtis  | Officers            |
| Update Report - 500 New Council Housing                       | Detlev Munster               | Members             |
| Temporary Accommodation Contract                              | Kiri Mason / Lorrita Johnson | Officers with Chair |
| Work Programme  | Democratic Services          | Standard Item       |
| <b>11 February 2020</b>                                       |                              |                     |
| Selective Licensing Final Report                              | Dulal Ahmed                  | Officers            |
| Tenant & Leasehold Satisfaction Monitoring                    | Chris Seman                  | Officers            |
|   |                              |                     |

|                |                     |               |
|----------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Work Programme | Democratic Services | Standard Item |
|----------------|---------------------|---------------|

Possible further reports:

- Older People's Housing Strategy
- Review of Sheltered Housing
- Affordability Study
- Independent Living
- Thurrock Regeneration Ltd (TRL)
- New Builds

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